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Trump praises Texas governor as border state clashes with Biden administration over immigration

By JONATHAN J. COOPER and ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Former President Donald Trump lavished praise Saturday on Texas Gov. Greg Abbott for not allowing the Biden administration entry to remove razor wire in a popular corridor for migrants illegally entering the U.S. in an escalating feud over immigration. In a speech focused overwhelmingly on border security, Trump said Texas should be given full support in its measures to deter migrants along the U.S.-Mexico border. The state is restricting the U.S. Border Patrol after the Supreme Court cleared the way for these federal agents to cut or remove the sharp metal barrier.



Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump speaks at a campaign event Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/John Locher)

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Associated Press
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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:	MONDAY:	TUESDAY:	WEDNESDAY:	THURSDAY:	FRIDAY:	SATURDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO SINGER 6:30 - 8:30pm	ANGELA FLORES VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm	JEAN PAUL SAXOPHONIST 6:30 - 8:30pm	EDDIE KROON SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm MAILLEYN ALVARADO VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm	MARRYBELL MADURO SINGER 6:30 - 8:30pm	RICKY THOMAS GUITARIST 7:00 - 9:00pm	EDDIE KROON SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm
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Tel +297 583 8000 Ext. 8106 Reservations at wateredge-aruba.com Elegant dining, spectacular ocean views enjoyed al fresco or in air conditioned comfort Located at Costa Linda Beach Resort			KARAOKE 9:00 - 11:00pm		ANGELA FLORES VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm	

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Trump praises Texas governor as border state clashes with Biden administration over immigration

Continued from Front

"When I'm president, instead of trying to send Texas a restraining order, I will send them reinforcements," Trump told a crowd of supporters in Las Vegas, where he rallied on an indoor soccer field in a largely Latino neighborhood. "Instead of fighting border states, I will use every resource tool and authority of the U.S. president to defend the United States of America from this horrible invasion that is taking place right now."

Trump largely avoided talking about a verdict delivered by a jury in a defamation case Friday, ordering him to pay an additional \$83.3 million to columnist E. Jean Carroll, who he called a liar for accusing



A woman cheers as Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump speaks at a campaign event Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024, in Las Vegas.

(AP Photo/John Locher)

him of sexual assault. The former president, who is getting closer to securing the Republican presidential nomination, said he was the victim of the Biden admin-

istration weaponizing law enforcement against him as he faces 91 criminal charges in four indictments accusing him of trying to overturn the 2020 presidential election,

mishandling classified documents and arranging payoffs to a porn star.

"What they're doing with elections and election interference as an example of what they do with me," he said. "Look at yesterday, look at all this crap that's going on, but we keep marching forward, we just keep going and somehow it all works out." Annabelle Weislocher, 51, a nurse who retired from the Navy and the Air Force Reserve, said she felt the cases against Trump are attempts

to weaken him and drain him from his resources.

"They know he's leading. They know he's strong. And they're doing everything just to lower him," she said. "That's what they're trying to do, take his money thinking he won't have enough funds to campaign. That's the goal."

Trump's support among Hispanics has grown since he first ran in 2016. And on Saturday, he drove that point, drawing loud cheers when he claimed he was doing very well in that voter demographic. □

13 people injured when more than 40 vehicles crash on Chesapeake Bay bridge in Maryland



This image provided by the Maryland Transportation Authority shows a multi-vehicle crash on US-50 Bay Bridge in Maryland, on Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024. The Maryland Transportation Authority said Saturday on social media that the crash on the westbound lanes has closed the bridge. No injuries have been reported. (Maryland Transportation Authority via AP)

BALTIMORE (AP) — Crashes involving more than 40 vehicles closed all lanes on the heavily-traveled U.S. 50 Bay Bridge in Maryland on Saturday, injuring 13 people and snarling traffic for about six hours, authorities said.

The Maryland Transportation Authority said on X, formerly Twitter, that the morning crashes on the westbound lanes closed the bridge and caused major delays for motorists.

The transportation authority said in a later post that eastbound and westbound traffic were alternating turns on the eastbound bridge, but the westbound bridge remained closed. Westbound lanes reopened Saturday afternoon, the transportation authority said on X.

Two people were taken to hospitals with serious injuries, authorities said. Eleven others also were hurt. None of the injuries were considered

life threatening.

Twenty-three vehicles were involved in the initial chain-reaction crash and investigators believe about 20 others were involved in a series of secondary crashes, the transportation authority said. Traffic cameras showed emergency vehicles with flashing lights and traffic not moving on the westbound lanes of the bridge. Several tow trucks removed vehicles involved in the crash from the bridge.

The cause of the crash was still being investigated Saturday afternoon, the transportation authority said.

The Anne Arundel County Police Department said motorists should anticipate heavy delays in Annapolis and Kent Island for an extended period of time.

Also known as the William Preston Lane Jr. Memorial Bridge, the span crosses the Chesapeake Bay. □



Live Entertainment at 8PM



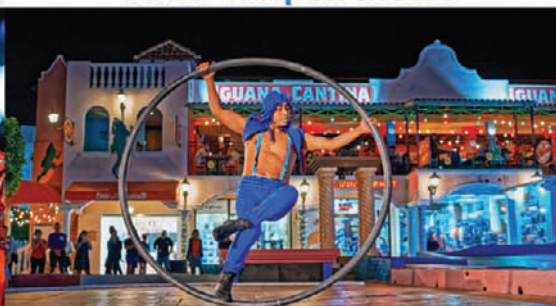
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GOP legislatures in some states seek ways to undermine voters' ability to determine abortion rights

By **CHRISTINE FERNANDO**
Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Legislative efforts in Missouri and Mississippi are attempting to prevent voters from having a say over abortion rights, building on anti-abortion strategies seen in other states, including last year in Ohio.

Democrats and abortion rights advocates say the efforts are evidence that Republican lawmakers and abortion opponents are trying to undercut democratic processes meant to give voters a direct role in forming state laws.

"They're scared of the people and their voices, so their response is to prevent their voices from being heard," said Laurie Bertram Roberts, executive director of Mississippi Reproductive Freedom Fund. "There's nothing democratic about that, and it's the same blueprint we've seen in Ohio and all these other states, again and again."

Since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the constitutional right to abortion in 2022, voters in seven states have either protected abortion rights or defeated attempts to curtail them in statewide votes. Democrats have pledged to make the issue a central campaign topic this year for races up and down the ballot.

A proposal passed Wednesday by the Mississippi House would ban residents from placing abortion initiatives on the statewide ballot. Mississippi has among the toughest abortion restrictions in the country, with the procedure banned except to save the life of the woman or in cases of rape or incest.

In response to the bill, Democratic Rep. Cheikh Taylor said direct democracy "shouldn't include terms and conditions."

"Don't let anyone tell you this is just about abortion," Taylor said. "This is about a Republican Party who thinks they know what's best for you better than you know what's best for



People rally in support of abortion rights, July 2, 2022, in Kansas City, Mo. Legislative efforts in Missouri and Mississippi this week are attempting to prevent voters from having a say over abortion rights, building on anti-abortion strategies seen in other states, including last year in Ohio.

(AP Photo/Charlie Riedel, File)

you. This is about control. So much for liberty and limited government."

The resolution is an attempt to revive a ballot initiative process in Mississippi, which has been without one since 2021 when the state Supreme Court ruled that the process was invalid because it required people to gather signatures from the state's five previous U.S. House districts. Mississippi dropped to four districts after the 2000 census, but the initiative language was never updated. Republican Rep. Fred Shanks said House Republicans would not have approved the resolution, which will soon head to the Senate, without the abortion exemption. Some House Republicans said voters should not be allowed to vote on changing abortion laws because Mississippi originated the legal case that overturned *Roe v. Wade*.

"It took 50 years ... to overturn *Roe v. Wade*," said Mississippi House Speaker Jason White, a Republican. "We weren't going to let it just be thrown out the window by folks coming in from out of state, spending 50 million bucks and running an initiative through."

But Mississippi Democrats and abortion access organizations panned the exemption as limiting the

voice of the people.

"This is an extremely undemocratic way to harm access to reproductive health care," said Sofia Tomov, operations coordinator with Access Reproductive Care Southeast, a member of the Mississippi Abortion Access Coalition. "It's infringing on people's ability to participate in the democratic process."

In Missouri, one of several states where an abortion rights initiative could go before voters in the fall, a plan supported by anti-abortion groups would require initiatives to win a majority vote in five of the state's eight congressional districts, in addition to a simple statewide majority.

The proposal comes days after a Missouri abortion-rights campaign launched its ballot measure effort aiming to enshrine abortion rights into the state constitution. Missouri abortion rights groups also have criticized Republican Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft, saying he is attempting to impede the initiative by manipulating the measure's ballot summary. A Missouri appeals court recently found the summaries were politically partisan and misleading.

When asked during a recent committee hearing if the GOP proposal was an

attempt to get rid of direct democracy, Republican state Rep. Ed Lewis said "I think that our founding fathers were about as fearful of direct democracy as we should be. That's why they created a republic." Sam Lee, lobbyist for Campaign Life Missouri, testified on Tuesday for the need for provisions like this that make sure "the rights of the minority aren't trampled on." "The concern of our founders, and the concern of many people throughout the decades and years, is to avoid having a tyranny of the majority," he said. Democratic Senate Minority Leader John Rizzo said controlling who can vote and on what subjects has been "the highest priority of the Republican Party for the last 20 years."

"This is how democracies die," he said in an interview. "We are watching it in real time. This is the scariest moment that I've seen in my lifetime."

Democratic Rep. Joe Adams criticized the plan in part by alleging that the state's congressional and legislative districts are gerrymandered to favor Republicans. That would make it nearly impossible for an abortion measure to be approved under the proposed legislation.

Attempts to keep abortion

measures off the ballot in Missouri and Mississippi follow a similar blueprint in other states to target the ballot initiative process, a form of direct democracy available to voters in only about half the states.

Florida's Republican attorney general has asked the state Supreme Court to keep a proposed abortion rights amendment off the ballot as an abortion-rights coalition this month reached the necessary number of signatures to qualify it for the 2024 ballot. In Nevada, a judge on Tuesday approved an abortion-rights ballot measure petition as eligible for signature-gathering, striking down a legal challenge by anti-abortion groups attempting to prevent the question from going before voters.

Ohio abortion rights advocates have said last year's statewide vote to enshrine abortion rights in the state constitution was as much about abortion as it was a referendum on democracy itself. They said Republicans tried to obstruct the democratic process before the vote and attempted to ignore the will of voters after the amendment passed.

Ohio Republicans called a special election in August attempting to raise the threshold for passing future constitutional amendments from a simple majority to 60%. That effort was defeated at the polls and was widely seen as aiming to undermine the abortion amendment.

After Ohio voters approved the abortion protections last year, Republican lawmakers pledged to block the amendment from reversing the state's restrictions. Some proposed preventing Ohio courts from interpreting any cases related to the amendment.

"It wasn't just about abortion," Deirdre Schifeling, chief political and advocacy officer of the ACLU, said last fall after the Ohio amendment passed. "It's about, 'Will the majority be heard?'"

Biden praises Black churches and says the world would be a different place without their example

By **ZEKE MILLER**

Associated Press

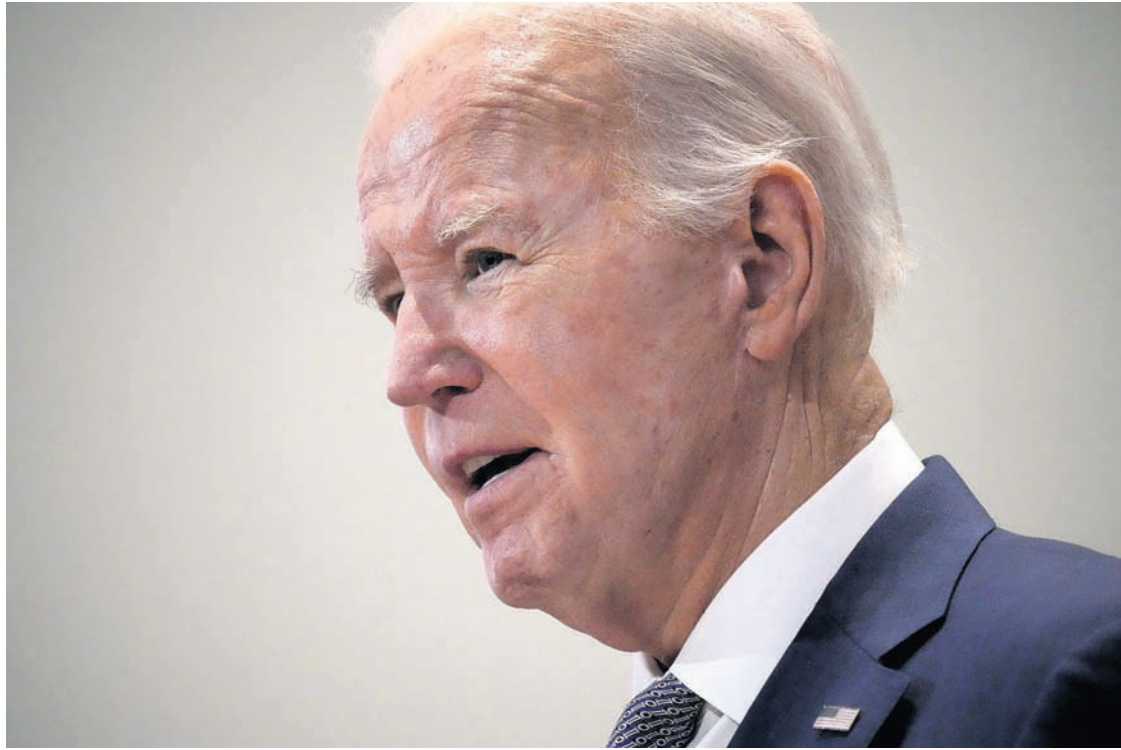
COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) —

President Joe Biden on Sunday extolled the existence of Black churches, saying the world would be a different place if they were not around to show people the "power of faith" during dark times.

The Democratic president spoke at St. John Baptist Church on the final day of a two-day visit to South Carolina designed to rally Black voters before the party's primary on Feb. 3.

Biden visited a predominantly Black barbershop and spoke at a state Democratic Party dinner after he flew in on Saturday. He capped the visit Sunday by addressing worshippers at separate churches.

The president is trying to spread the message that he's loyal to South Carolina, which saved his campaign in 2020, and that he's determined to win back Black voters here and elsewhere who were central to putting him in office but are



President Joe Biden speaks at St. John Baptist Church in Columbia, S.C., on Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024. (AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

less enthused about him this time around.

A practicing Roman Catholic who attends Mass every Sunday, Biden praised Black churches in his appearance before the Baptist congregation, saying the churches teach the "power of faith."

He asked the worshippers to imagine "what would have happened if there had been no Black church" to turn to in times of darkness.

"Well, you give us a mountaintop, you give us a promised land, you give us a dream and a faith that

we shall overcome, can overcome," he said, echoing words once spoken by the late Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

"And you push us toward a more perfect union, you really do, to bend the arc of the moral universe toward justice together, and what

a gift to the nation and the world you've been.

"Your prayers mean everything," Biden said.

After he spoke, Biden issued a written statement on the deaths of three U.S. service members and the injuries to many others in a drone strike in northeast Jordan near the Syrian border. He attributed the attack to Iran-backed militia groups. Later Sunday, the president briefly addressed the drone strike and asked for a moment of silence when he appeared at the banquet hall of Brookland Baptist Church. Biden has a long-standing relationship with Pastor Charles Jackson. Jackson's wife, Robin, is first lady Jill Biden's prayer partner. Earlier this month, Biden delivered one of his first campaign speeches of the year at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, where in 2015 nine Black parishioners were shot to death by the white stranger they had invited to join their Bible study. □

US sees signs of progress on deal to release hostages, bring temporary pause to Israel-Hamas war



People attend a demonstration demanding the release of the hostages taken by Hamas militants into the Gaza Strip during the Oct. 7th attack, in Tel Aviv, Israel, Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024.

(AP Photo/Ariel Schalit)

By **AAMER MADHANI and**

ZEKE MILLER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

U.S. negotiators are making progress on a potential agreement under which Israel would pause military

operations against Hamas in Gaza for two months in exchange for the release of more than 100 hostages who were captured in the Oct. 7 attack on Israel, according to two senior administration officials.

The officials, who requested anonymity to discuss the sensitive negotiations, said Saturday that emerging terms of the yet-to-be sealed deal would play out over two phases.

In the first phase, fighting would stop to allow for the remaining women, elderly and wounded hostages to be released by Hamas.

Israel and Hamas would then aim to work out details during the first 30 days of the pause for a second phase in which Israeli soldiers and civilian men would be released. The emerging deal also calls for Israel to allow more humanitarian aid into Gaza.

While the proposed deal would not end the war, U.S. officials are hopeful that such an agreement could lay the groundwork for a durable resolution to the

conflict.

The New York Times first reported on Saturday that progress has been made towards an agreement for a pause in fighting in exchange for the remaining hostages.

CIA director Bill Burns is expected to discuss the contours of the emerging agreement when he meets on Sunday in France with David Barnea, the head of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency, Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, and Egyptian intelligence chief Abbas Kamel for talks centered on the hostage negotiations, according to three people familiar with the scheduled meeting who were not authorized to comment publicly.

President Joe Biden on Friday spoke by phone with

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi and Qatar's ruling emir, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani. Calls with both leaders focused on the hostage situation.

Burns heads to France for the high-level talks after White House senior adviser Brett McGurk traveled to the Mideast this week for talks on the hostage situation.

If Burns sees progress in his talks in France, Biden may dispatch McGurk back to the Mideast quickly to try to complete an agreement. McGurk during his talks this week was also laying the groundwork for another trip to the region by Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who next week could make his fifth trip to the Middle East since the start of the Israel-Hamas war in October. □

Poland protests error in a social media post by EU chief suggesting Auschwitz death camp was Polish

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Poland protested Sunday a mistake in a social media post by the head of the European Commission that wrongly suggested the World War II Auschwitz death camp was Polish. That post by Ursula von der Leyen on X, formerly Twitter, was later corrected to say that Auschwitz was a Nazi German extermination camp.

In the post, von der Leyen and European Union commissioners pay tribute to victims of the Holocaust to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Saturday. They write and say the names of some of the victims. Added text

states their birth and death place and date. In the original post, the Auschwitz camp was described only as "Poland."

Phone and text messages left Sunday with Christian Wigand, EU Commission spokesman, were not immediately returned.

Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski wrote on X that "When referring to the Nazi extermination camp in Auschwitz, it should be noted that it was established under German occupation." He added that "information posted on the European Commission's social media will be clarified."

On Saturday, a group of Holocaust survivors and

state officials held a modest ceremony at the memorial and museum site of Auschwitz-Birkenau to mark the 79th anniversary of the camp's liberation by the Soviet troops on Jan. 17, 1945. The day is now dedicated to Holocaust remembrance.

Germany invaded neighboring Poland on Sept. 1, 1939, starting World War II. Beginning in 1940, the Nazis were using old Austrian military barracks in the southern town of Oswiecim as a concentration and death camp for Polish resistance members. In 1942 they added the nearby Birkenau part, with gas chambers and crematoria, as a mass



A Holocaust survivor places a lit candle at the monument at the Birkenau Nazi death camp during a ceremony in Oswiecim, Poland, Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024. Survivors of Nazi death camps marked the 79th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp during World War II in a ceremony in southern Poland.

(AP Photo/Czarek Sokolowski)

extermination site, mostly of Europe's Jews. □

South Korea says North Korea fired several cruise missiles, adding to provocative weapons tests



A TV screen shows a file image of North Korea's missile launch during a news program at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea, Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024. South Korea's military said Sunday that North Korea fired several cruise missiles that flew over waters near a major military shipyard on the country's eastern coast, extending a streak in weapons tests that are worsening tensions with the United States, South Korea and Japan.

(AP Photo/Ahn Young-joon)

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea's military said Sunday that North Korea

on the country's eastern coast, extending a streak in weapons tests that are worsening tensions with the United States, South Korea and Japan.

The launches followed a separate round of North Korean cruise missile tests last week and a Jan. 14 test-firing of the country's first solid-fuel intermediate-range ballistic missile. Those tests reflect North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's efforts to expand his arsenal of weapons designed to overwhelm missile defenses in South Korea and Japan and remote U.S. targets in the Pacific, including Guam. South Korea's Joint

Chiefs of Staff said they detected the missiles over waters near the North Korean port of Sinpo, where the North has a major shipyard building key naval vessels, including missile-firing submarines.

The South's military didn't immediately provide specific launch details, including the number of missiles fired, how far they flew and whether they were launched from land or naval assets.

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula have increased in recent months as Kim continues to accelerate his weapons development and issue provocative

threats of nuclear conflict with the U.S. and its Asian allies. The U.S., South Korea and Japan in response have been expanding their combined military exercises, which Kim portrays as invasion rehearsals, and sharpening their deterrence strategies built around nuclear-capable U.S. assets. North Korea said its launches last week involved a new cruise missile called Pulhwasal-3-31 and described the test as part of regular efforts to develop its military. The North described that missile as "strategic," implying a possible intent to arm it with nuclear weapons. □

Ukraine says corrupt officials stole \$40 million meant to buy arms for the war with Russia

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Employees from a Ukrainian arms firm conspired with defense ministry officials to embezzle almost \$40 million earmarked to buy 100,000 mortar shells for the war with Russia, Ukraine's security service reported.

The SBU said late Saturday that five people have been charged, with one person detained while trying to

cross the Ukrainian border. If found guilty, they face up to 12 years in prison.

The investigation comes as Kyiv attempts to clamp down on corruption in a bid to speed up its membership in the European Union and NATO. Officials from both blocs have demanded widespread anti-graft reforms before Kyiv can join them. Ukrainian President

Volodymyr Zelenskyy was elected on an anti-corruption platform in 2019, long before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Both the president and his aides have portrayed the recent firings of top officials, notably that of Ivan Bakanov, former head of the State Security Service, in July 2022, as proof of their efforts to crack

down on graft. Security officials say that the current investigation dates back to August 2022, when officials signed a contract for artillery shells worth 1.5 billion hryvnias (\$39.6 million) with arms firm Lviv Arsenal.

After receiving payment, company employees were supposed to transfer the funds to a business registered abroad, which would

then deliver the ammunition to Ukraine.

However, the goods were never delivered and the money was instead sent to various accounts in Ukraine and the Balkans, investigators said. Ukraine's prosecutor general says that the funds have since been seized and will be returned to the country's defense budget. □

Mexico confirms some Mayan ruin sites are unreachable because of gang violence and land conflicts

By **MARK STEVENSON**

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico's government has acknowledged that at least two well-known Mayan ruin sites are unreachable by visitors because of a toxic mix of cartel violence and land disputes.

But two tourist guides in the southern state of Chiapas, near the border with Guatemala, say two other sites that the government claims are still open to visitors can only be reached by passing through drug gang checkpoints.

The explosion of drug cartel violence in Chiapas since last year has left the Yaxchilán ruin site completely cut off, the government conceded Friday.

The tour guides, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they must still work in the area, said that gunmen and checkpoints are often seen on the road to another site, Bonampak, famous for its murals.

They say that to get to yet another archaeological site, Lagartero, travelers are forced to hand over identification and cellphones at cartel checkpoints.

Meanwhile, officials concede that visitors also can't go to the imposing, towering pyramids at Tonina, because a landowner has shut off access to his land while seeking payment from the government for granting the right of way.

The cartel-related dangers are the most problematic. The two cartels warring over the area's lucrative drug and migrant smuggling routes set up the checkpoints to detect any movement by their rivals.

Though no tourist has been harmed so far, and the government claims the sites are safe, many guides no longer take tour groups there.

"It's as if you told me to go to the Gaza Strip, right?" said one of the guides.

"They demand your identification, to see if you're a local resident," he said, describing an almost permanent gang checkpoint



A view of the archaeological site Yaxchilan in Chiapas state, Saturday, July 9, 2022.

(AP Photo/Eduardo Verdugo)

on the road to Lagartero, a Mayan pyramid complex that is surrounded by pristine, turquoise jungle lagoons. "They take your cellphone and demand your sign-in code, and then they look through your conversations to see if you belong to some other gang," he said. "At any given time, a rival group could show up and start a gunbattle."

The government seems unconcerned, and there is even anger that anyone would suggest there is a problem, in line with President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's policy of playing down gang violence — even as the cartels take over more territory in Mexico.

"Bonampak and Lagartero are open to the public," the National Institute of Anthropology and History said in a statement Friday.

"It is false, biased and irresponsible to say that these archaeological sites are in danger from drug traffickers," added the agency, known as the INAH, which claimed it "retains control of the sites."

Both guides stressed that the best-known Mayan

ruin site in Chiapas, the imposing temple complex at Palenque, is open and perfectly safe for visitors. But starting around December, tourists have canceled about 5% of trips booked to the area, and there are fears that could grow.

Things that some tourists once enjoyed — like the more adventurous trip to ruins buried deep in the jungle, like Yaxchilán, on the banks of the Usumacinta river and reachable only by boat — are either no longer possible, or so risky that several guides have publicly announced they won't take tourists there.

Residents of the town of Frontera Comalapa, where the boats once picked up tourists to take them to Yaxchilan, closed the road in October because of constant incursions by gunmen. Even the INAH admits there is no access to Yaxchilan, noting that "the institute itself has recommended at certain points that tourists not go to the archaeological site, because they could have an unsuccessful visit." But it said that the problems there are "of a social nature" and are be-

yond its control.

Cartel battles started to get really bad in Chiapas in 2023, which coincides with the uptick in the number of migrants — now about a half-million annually — moving through the Darien Gap jungle from South America and Mexico to the U.S. border.

Because many of the new wave of migrants are from Cuba, Asia and Africa, they can pay more than Central Americans, making the smuggling routes through Chiapas more valuable. The problem now seems to be beyond anyone's control.

The National Guard — the quasi-military force that López Obrador has made the centerpiece of law enforcement in Mexico — has been pelted with stones and sticks by local residents in several towns in that region of Chiapas in recent weeks.

The other tour guide said that was because the two warring drug cartels, Sinaloa and Jalisco, often recruit or force local people to act as foot soldiers and prevent National

Guard troopers from entering their towns.

In Chiapas, residents are often members of Indigenous groups like the Choles or Lacandonos, both descendants of the ancient Maya. The potential damage of using them as foot soldiers in cartel fights is grim, given that some groups have either very few remaining members or are already locked in land disputes.

The guide said the ruin sites have the added disadvantage of being in jungle areas where the cartels have carved out at least four clandestine landing strips to fly drugs in from South America.

But the damages are mounting for the Indigenous residents who have come to depend on tourism.

"There are communities that sell handicrafts, that provide places to stay, boat trips, craftspeople. It affects the economy a lot," said the first guide. "You have to remember that this is an agricultural state that has no industry, no factories, so tourism has become an economic lever, one of the few sources of work." □

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The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and its history

(Oranjestad)—The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins is one of the most visited places by tourists on the island, as it lies along the northern coast line near the mini pool and on the way to the Natural Bridge. Despite its seemingly plain appearance, this ruin represents one of the most important histories of the island: The Aruban Gold Rush.



Built in 1872 by English company Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd, the gold mill at Bushiribana was constructed in the area where most gold was found by locals. The story of gold on Aruba actually dates back to 1725, when a first exploration for gold on the island

was commissioned by the Dutch West India Company. Under the leadership of Mr. Paulus Printz, a three-year search was conducted on Aruba, to no avail. Though they found some gold, it was enough to motivate a further

search, and the assignment was discontinued by Printz himself.

It wasn't until 100 years later, in 1824, when a young boy found a lump of gold while out herding his father's

sheep. His father took it to a local merchant who then sold the lump for \$70. Unbeknownst to the boy and his father, they quite literally struck gold, and as word got out, a gold fever spread among the locals who started searching for more gold. About 25 pounds worth was found.

At the same time, the Aruban government took immediate actions, and informed Curaçao that gold was found. At first, everyone could look for gold, as long as they sold it to the government. However, after some time, the government decided to implement stricter rules and banned local search parties.

the world, all of which used primitive methods to dig and carve out gold from the rocks. Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. was no different, but used a unique method that involved grinding the rocks and letting the dust be blown away by the strong northeast wind, leaving clumps of gold behind. The next step was melting the gold and letting it attach to quicksilver in order to obtain pure gold. All these processes were done at the Bushiribana Gold Mill.

The gold mill itself had a short life-span: only 10 years in service, but its structure remained relatively solid till this day, and is now a historical remnant. □

Over the years, concession-holding had seen different companies from around

Sources: Etnia Nativa & gold-mineranch.com.

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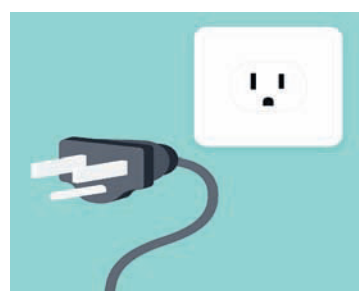
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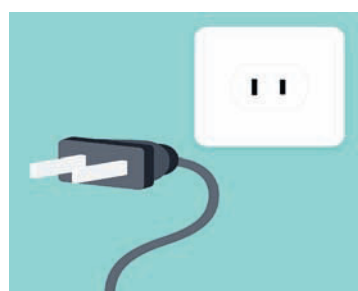
So whether it is a transfer for your party, an Island or Beach Hopping Tour or their famous Bar Hopping Tour on one of our Party Buses, Chogogo Tours is the tour operator for you. □



(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Emergency services

Even though most people don't even want to think about having to contact



emergency services—especially not while on their vacation, it is still important to know what number to dial in case of the unlikely event of an accident or severe incident.

Police: 100
 Police Tipline: 11141
 Ambulance: 911
 Fire Dept: 115
 Oranjestad: HOH hospital: +297-527-4000
 San Nicolas: ImSan: +297-527-8833

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe

to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Taxis

Prices for taxi fair are set by

the Department of Public Traffic and are based on destination rather than mileage. Most taxis can take up to five passengers, but this may vary depending on the vehicle. Taxis are pretty much always available and you can ever hire one for \$45 an hour.

Safety

Aruba is one of the safest islands in the Caribbean, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe. □

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Aruba to me



ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from our visitors Joanne and Bob Marsala from Rochester, NY, USA. They wrote to us saying: "Aruba to



us is peace...a place that is stress free . Where the people, places and weather are all awesome. We've been coming for 20 years and the last 3 years our family has tagged along and grown to love it just like us."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers!☑

Create museum memories

ORANJESTAD — Museums are an integral part of conserving and honoring cultures, and Aruba is no exception. Our Island has a wide selection of various museums for our locals and visitors to see. Take this opportunity to learn about our island and experience a different day beyond the beach. Let us introduce to you these museums.

Museum of Industry Aruba

The Museum of Industry is located in San Nicolas—better known as the art capital of Aruba. This museum exhibits the industrial history of gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and tourism through elaborated displays and multimedia installations.

The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history, which began in the 19th century. The Water Tower was built in 1939 and consists of three sections: the substructure, the high-rising vertical shaft, and the tank at the top. The Water Tower was purchased by the

Monuments Fund in 2003 so it can be restored and preserved as one of Aruba's monuments. The Museum of Industry is part of Aruba Museum Foundation (Fundacion Museo Aruban), which is a foundation set to maintain, preserve, and protect the Aruban cultural sector, history, and nature. The museum of Industry is open daily from 9 am till 6 pm. For more information, check out their Facebook page Museum of Industry Aruba.

Archaeological Museum of Aruba

The Archaeological Museum of Aruba is located at Schelpstraat 42 in downtown Oranjestad. The renovated historic Ecury complex in the area has been transformed from a family home to a modern museum that preserves Aruba's Amerindian cultural heritage. This 21st century museum is especially designed to preserve valuable artifacts dating back to the Pre-Ceramic period of 2500 BC.

In the late 1980's, AMA identified its need for an adequate housing for its collection and activities. After studying various options, a project proposal was drawn up, including the acquisition and restoration of historical buildings in downtown Oranjestad.

These historical buildings were formerly the property of the Ecury family. The "Ecury Complex", is a cluster of single and two-story historic buildings, mainly Dutch colonial architecture from the late 19th and 20th century on a plot of approximately 1.700 m2.

In 1997, the Aruban Government bought the complex for the National Archaeological Museum project. In 2004, a financial agreement was signed with the European Development Fund and in 2006, restoration and construction work began on the monumental buildings and the soon-to-be exhibition space. In December 2007, the key to the complex was delivered and the museum's employees moved to the new location. The

final design for the exhibit was completed in November 2007 and the permanent exhibit, financed by the Aruban Government and the Union of Cultural Organizations (UNOCA), opened in July 2009.

At the new location, the National Archaeological Museum Aruba disposes of approximately 500 m2 for its permanent exhibit. This exhibit conveys information on the origin and culture of the first inhabitants of the island through archaeological objects and modern exhibition techniques. The new permanent exhibit gives the visitor an insight into the cultures that inhabited the island in Pre-Historical and Early Historical times. The museum also hosts attractive public programs, including lectures, educational projects, temporary exhibits and workshops.

The museum is open daily from 9:30 am till 4:30 pm. For more information check out the Facebook page Museo Arqueologico Nacional Aruba.☑

Unique fauna of Aruba

For a small island, Aruba sure has a lot of unique treasures. Among these, we have some subspecies of animals that are unique to our island. These have evolved to perfectly adapt to our desert climate and make Aruba their home. At the same time, they are part of what makes Aruba truly one of a kind.

Cascabel (rattlesnake, *Crotalus durissus unicolor*)

According to the Arikok National Park, Aruba knows two kinds of snakes, the Santanero and the Cascabel. The cascabel belongs to the rattlesnake family. The cascabel is the only venomous snake from Aruba. It has a length of 65cm to 100cm, and is about 4 to 5cm wide. Its color varies from light brown to grey-brown, and its underbelly is white. On its back there are marks that are a little darker, in the shape of diamonds.

Its reproduction is oviparous, meaning the offspring can hatch from their eggs just before, during or immediately after laying.

The cascabel lives mainly in the Arikok National Park. It likes to live in dark places, and is thus found hidden among the limestone rocks and under stones. As a defense mechanism, the cascabel uses its rattle as a warning, and it is not an aggressive animal.

The cascabel feeds on lizards, small mammals such as rats and mice. It paralyzes or kills its prey with its venom, which is injected through a bite. The enemies of the cascabel are donkeys, goats, humans and cars. Humans are the biggest enemy of the cascabel, as they kill them and destroy their habitat for urbanization.

Shoco (burrowing owl, *Athene cucularia arubensis*)

The shoco is a small bird which is seldom seen. They are active during the day but are more active later in the day and at night for hunting.

These owls have very good night vision and very good hearing. The shoco is the national symbol of Aruba.

The shoco has about 20cm of length, and the females are slightly heavier than the males. They are light brown in color, with many white spots. The belly of the Shoco is either white or light brown, and the shoco has striking yellow eyes. Its beak is yellow/green. Young owls do not have white spots and are lighter in color. The nest of the shoco is a burrow in the ground. If the shoco cannot find a burrow, it will dig one in soft soil. The shoco lays one or two eggs every other day until all the eggs are laid – a shoco can lay up to four eggs. The first owlets hatch after three to four weeks. The shoco owl takes care of the owlets for three months until they leave the nest. Only a few owlets survive.

The owls dig burrows in the ground with low grass vegetation. An owl can live up to nine years.

Its defense mechanism is simply to fly away or retreat to its burrows. They eat mostly insects, mice and lizards, and the main threats to their survival are boas – an invasive species introduced by humans as pets – and humans through destruction of their habitat.

Prikichi

(parakeet, *Aratinga pertinax*)

The Prikichi is the national bird of Aruba. On Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, parakeets can be found, but each of the three islands has a different breed. The Yellow-shouldered Amazon parakeet that we have on Aruba is also found along the coast of Venezuela. Unfortunately, there is interbreeding between the breeds due to cage birds from, for example, Curaçao being released on Aruba. The parakeet population on Aruba is in danger due to extensive deforestation occurring on the island because of the growing population.



The prikichi weighs between 90 to 100 grams. It has a greenish-brown head with some yellow around the eye. The back and wings of the parakeet are dark green, and the underside of the body is a lighter shade of green. There is also a bit of blue in the wings. The parakeet's beak is gray/black.

Parakeets often use termite nests as breeding sites. Parakeets are found in all natural environments (mondi) of the island. It defends itself by flying away and loud cries. Parakeets eat seeds from the pods of the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi, and columnar cactus. They also consume natural fruits. Its main predators are boa constrictors, humans.

Conew (cottontail rabbit, *Sylvilagus floridanus nigronuchalis*)

The Eastern Cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) was probably brought over to the island by Indian settlers thousands of years ago as a source of food. This rabbit, locally known as Conew, has spread all over the island and has become part of our ecosystem. The very adaptable Conew can live in a wide variety of habitats, including Aruba's xeric scrublands, where it typically grazes on weeds and grasses.

The Aruban Conew has a brownish grey color and a distinctive white belly. This white fur extends to the bottom of the tail which becomes visible as the rabbit runs. These rabbits can grow up to approximately 40 centimeters in length over their

short lifespan of 3 years. Cottontail rabbits reach reproductive maturity when they are just 2 to 3 months old. A female rabbit, called a doe, finds a suitable nest spot under a shrub or rocks and lines it with fur. She can have an average of 3 to 4 litters per year averaging 5 young each. The doe only visits her young once or twice a day to nurse her babies for a period of 2 to 3 weeks. The young reach independence at 4 to 5 weeks.

The Aruban Conew is an endangered species and protected by Aruban law. The Conew is thought to have drastically declined due to an increase in human activities, habitat fragmentation and predation by the invasive Boa constrictor as well as feral cats and dogs. However, recently there seem to be more rabbit sightings in rural and wilderness areas and also in the National Park. This could be linked to a recent decline of the invasive Boa population after the long period of drought. As the Conew can reproduce very quickly, a short break in predation pressure can lead to a fast increase of rabbits. Sadly, the Boas are back on the rise again with the truly wet rainy seasons we have recently experienced. This could cause a new decline in the Conew population that was just starting to recover.

These are but a few of Aruba's beautiful inhabitant, which we must all contribute to protect. For more information, visit <https://www.arubanationalpark.org/main/flora-fauna/> □



Did you know about... Basic driving rules on Aruba (part 1)

(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.

Speed limit

Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive in—both at maximum and minimum speed—is on the right lane.



Roundabouts

Speaking of roundabouts, it is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.

Most roundabouts have these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to

the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far left (exit 3), then you need to switch to the left lane on the highway before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be quite tricky

to navigate...

Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout)

Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could—and has—caused confusion among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout (left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout, now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of the roundabout. The rules don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

Airport roundabout

Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy (hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out heading east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is

used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

"Las Americas" roundabout

The Las Americas roundabout is located near the Talk of the Town hotel, west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout—and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

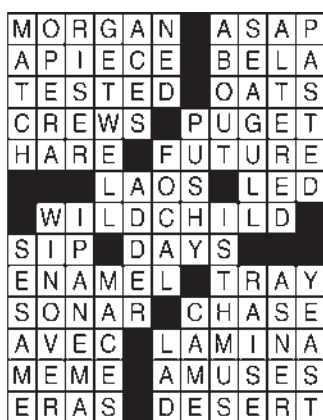
It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt! □



CROSSWORD

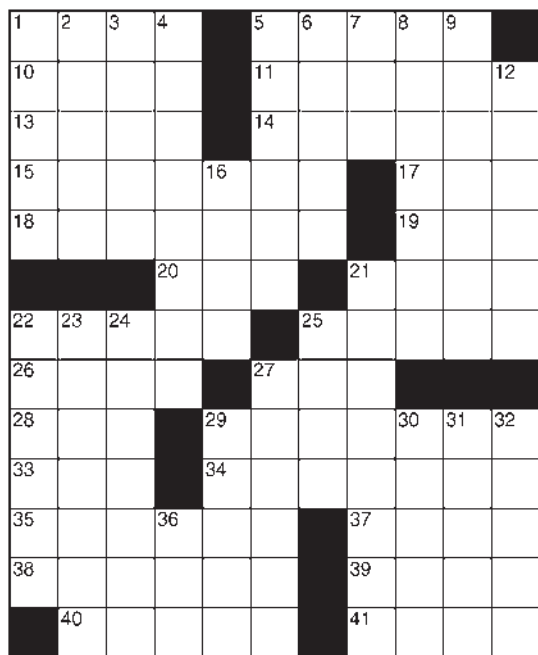
By **THOMAS JOSEPH**

- ACROSS**
- 38 Volcanic rock
 - 1 Sprees
 - 5 Signs a lease
 - 10 Gumbo vegetable
 - 11 Wards off
 - 13 African roarer
 - 14 Fine point
 - 15 Car price reducer
 - 17 "— little teapot ..."
 - 18 Softball game setting
 - 19 Chiding sound
 - 20 Battleship letters
 - 21 Foot part
 - 22 Baling need
 - 25 Louvre location
 - 26 Ready to pick
 - 27 Supply with staff
 - 28 Hoppy pint, for short
 - 29 Balloon ballast
 - 33 Signing need
 - 34 Vienna's nation
 - 35 Handy
 - 37 Jamaican exports
- DOWN**
- 1 Sudden shocks
 - 2 Director Kurosawa
 - 3 Pun response
 - 4 Saharan hill
 - 5 Hams' needs
 - 6 News item
 - 7 Tennis need
 - 8 Treasonous fellow
 - 9 Response causes
 - 12 Blackboards
 - 16 Different boards
 - 21 Place to use a wedge
 - 22 Make a mistake
 - 23 Cleans, as a spill
 - 24 Beach in a 1964 song
 - 25 Skillets
 - 27 Handled roughly
 - 29 Pasta topper
 - 30 Lout
 - 31 Prepared to fire
 - 32 Nebula makeup
 - 36 Tall tree



Saturday's answer

- 1 Sudden shocks
- 2 Director Kurosawa
- 3 Pun response
- 4 Saharan hill
- 5 Hams' needs
- 6 News item
- 7 Tennis need
- 8 Treasonous fellow
- 9 Response causes
- 12 Blackboards
- 16 Different boards
- 21 Place to use a wedge
- 22 Make a mistake
- 23 Cleans, as a spill
- 24 Beach in a 1964 song
- 25 Skillets
- 27 Handled roughly
- 29 Pasta topper
- 30 Lout
- 31 Prepared to fire
- 32 Nebula makeup
- 36 Tall tree



1-29

AXYDLBAAXR
is **LONGFELLOW**

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

1-29 CRYPTOQUOTE

LJPFLV EQIR SNJV: SNFLF JV

QI NTLLA. RF VNKYY HFS

SNFLF VIOF XKA. — K.K.

OJYQF

Saturday's Cryptoquote: JANUARY IS MY FAVORITE MONTH WHEN THE LIGHT IS PLAINEST, LEAST COLORED. AND I LIKE THE FEELING OF BEGINNINGS. — ANNE TRUITT

Science sleuths are using technology to find fakery and plagiarism in published research

By **CARLA K. JOHNSON**
AP Medical Writer

Allegations of research fakery at a leading cancer center have turned a spotlight on scientific integrity and the amateur sleuths uncovering image manipulation in published research. Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, a Harvard Medical School affiliate, announced Jan. 22 it's requesting retractions and corrections of scientific papers after a British blogger flagged problems in early January. The blogger, 32-year-old Sholto David, of Pontypridd, Wales, is a scientist-sleuth who detects cut-and-paste image manipulation in published scientific papers.

He's not the only hobbyist poking through pixels. Other champions of scientific integrity are keeping researchers and science journals on their toes. They use special software, oversize computer monitors and their eagle eyes to find flipped, duplicated and stretched images, along with potential plagiarism. A look at the situation at Dana-Farber and the sleuths hunting sloppy errors and outright fabrications:

WHAT HAPPENED AT DANA-FARBER?

In a Jan. 2 blog post, Sholto David presented suspicious images from more than 30 published papers by four Dana-Farber scientists, including CEO Laurie Glimcher and COO William Hahn. Many images appeared to have duplicated segments that would make the scientists' results look stronger. The papers under scrutiny



FILE - A sign hangs from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Aug. 18, 2022, in Boston. Dana-Farber Cancer Institute announced it's requesting six retractions and 31 corrections of scientific papers after a British blogger flagged problems in early January 2024.

(AP Photo/Charles Krupa, File)

involve lab research on the workings of cells. One involved samples from bone marrow from human volunteers. The blog post included problems spotted by David and others previously exposed by sleuths on PubPeer, a site that allows anonymous comments on scientific papers. Student journalists at The Harvard Crimson covered the story on Jan. 12, followed by reports in other news media. Sharpening the attention was the recent plagiarism investigation involving former Harvard president Claudine Gay, who resigned early this year.

HOW DID DANA-FARBER RESPOND?

Dana-Farber said it already had been looking into some of the problems before the blog post. By Jan. 22, the institution said it was in the process of requesting six retractions of published research and that another 31 papers warranted corrections. Retractions are serious.

When a journal retracts an article that usually means the research is so severely flawed that the findings are no longer reliable.

Dr. Barrett Rollins, research integrity officer at Dana-Farber, said in a statement: "Following the usual practice at Dana-Farber to review any potential data error and make corrections when warranted, the institution and its scientists already have taken prompt and decisive action in 97 percent of the cases that had been flagged by blogger Sholto David."

WHO ARE THE SLEUTHS?

California microbiologist Elisabeth Bik, 57, has been sleuthing for a decade. Based on her work, scientific journals have retracted 1,133 articles, corrected 1,017 others and printed 153 expressions of concern, according to a spreadsheet where she tracks what happens after she reports problems. She has found doctored images of bacteria, cell cultures and western blots, a lab technique for detecting proteins.

"Science should be about finding the truth," Bik told The Associated Press. She published an analysis in the American Society for Microbiology in 2016: Of more than 20,000 peer-reviewed papers, nearly 4% had image problems, about half where the manipulation seemed intentional. □

Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso withdraw from West Africa regional bloc ECOWAS as tensions deepen



FILE - The defense chiefs from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) countries excluding Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea and Niger, gather for their extraordinary meeting in Accra, Ghana, Thursday, Aug. 17, 2023, to discuss the situation in Niger. Three West African nations of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger have quit the regional economic bloc known as ECOWAS. Their respective juntas said in a joint statement on Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024 that the bloc has imposed "inhumane" sanctions to reverse the coups in their nations and has also "moved away from the ideals of its founding fathers and Pan-Africanism" after nearly 50 years of its establishment.

(AP Photo/Richard Eshun Nanaresh, File)

By **CHINEDU ASADU**
Associated Press

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — West African nations Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger have withdrawn from the regional economic bloc known as ECOWAS, their respective juntas announced Sunday. They accused the bloc of "inhumane" sanctions to reverse the coups in their nations. ECOWAS said in a statement that it wasn't notified of the countries' decision to withdraw.

The juntas said in a joint statement read on state television in all three countries that they have "decided in complete sovereignty on the immediate withdrawal

of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)," alleging that the bloc has "moved away from the ideals of its founding fathers and pan-Africanism" after nearly 50 years in existence.

"Furthermore, ECOWAS, under the influence of foreign powers, betraying its founding principles, has become a threat to its member states and its populations whose happiness it is supposed to ensure," their statements read.

ECOWAS said in a statement that it had not been notified of the countries' decision to quit the bloc. Its protocol provides that withdrawal

takes up to one year to be completed. "Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali remain important members of the Community and the Authority remains committed to finding a negotiated solution to the political impasse," it said. Widely seen as West Africa's top political and regional authority, the 15-nation bloc of ECOWAS — formed in 1975 to "promote economic integration" in member states — has struggled in recent years to reverse rampant coups in the region where citizens have complained of not benefitting from rich natural resources.

In parts of West Africa, ECOWAS is fast losing its effectiveness and support among citizens, who see it as representing only the interests of the leaders and not that of the masses, said Oge Onubogu, director of the Africa Program at the Washington-based Wilson Center think tank. Sunday's

announcement is the latest twist in a series of events that have deepened political tension in West Africa since it experienced its latest of a string of coups — in Niger — last year. It also comes as the three nations have formed a security alliance after severing military ties with France and other European nations and turning to Russia for support. □



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DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad

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San Nicolas

ImSan 24 hours
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Eagle: Tel. 587 9011
San Nicolas: Tel. 584 5712

Women in Difficulties

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

FAVI- Visually Impaired
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Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia
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A trial in Run-DMC star Jam Master Jay's 2002 killing is starting, and testing his anti-drug image

By **JENNIFER PELTZ**
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — For almost two decades, the 2002 killing of Run-DMC's Jam Master Jay stood as one of the hip-hop world's most infamous and elusive crimes, one of three long-unsolved slayings of major rap stars. Now Jay's case is the first of those killings to go to trial. Opening statements are set for Monday in the federal murder trial of Karl Jordan Jr. and Ronald Washington, who were arrested in 2020. "A brazen act," then-Brooklyn U.S. Attorney Seth DuCharme said at the time, "has finally caught up with them."

Washington and Jordan are accused of gunning down Jay in his recording studio over a drug dispute, a prosecution narrative challenging the public understanding of a DJ known for his anti-drug advocacy. They have pleaded not guilty, as has a third defendant who was charged this past May and will be tried separately. Jay, born Jason Mizell, formed Run-DMC in the early 1980s with Darryl "DMC" McDaniels and Joseph Simmons, known as DJ Run and Rev. Run. Together, the hat-wearing, Adidas-loving friends from the Hollis section of Queens built a rap juggernaut that helped the young genre go mainstream.



FILE - Pedestrians pass a mural, by artist Art1Airbrush, of rap pioneer Jam Master Jay of Run-DMC, Tuesday, Aug. 18, 2020, in the Queens borough of New York. Opening statements are set for Monday in the federal murder trial of Karl Jordan Jr. and Ronald Washington, who were arrested in 2020 for the murder of Jam Master Jay.

They were the first rappers with gold and platinum albums and a Rolling Stone cover. They were the first hip-hop group with a video on MTV, where their subsequent 1986 collaboration with Aerosmith on the classic rockers' "Walk This Way" would bust through a wall between rap and rock, literally doing so in the accompanying music video. The group was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2009. "We always knew rap was for everyone," Jay said in a

2001 MTV interview. "Anyone could rap over all kinds of music." Embracing rock sounds, rap wordplay and New York attitude, Run-DMC notched hits talking about things ranging from their fame to people's foibles, including perhaps the only top-100 reference to somebody accidentally eating dog food. The group also made clear where they stood on drugs and crime. "We are not thugs, we don't use drugs," they declared on the platinum-selling 1987

(AP Photo/John Minchillo, File)

single "It's Tricky." The group did an anti-drug public service announcement and shows, called for a day of peace between warring Los Angeles gangs, established scholarships and held voter registration drives at concerts. Along the way, Jay opened a 24/7 studio in Hollis and a label, mentoring up-and-comers including 50 Cent. Jay was killed at that studio on Oct. 30, 2002. His death followed the drive-by shootings of Tupac Shakur in 1996

and The Notorious B.I.G. in 1997, a trio of hip-hop tragedies that frustrated investigators for decades. A man was charged in September in Shakur's killing in Las Vegas and has pleaded not guilty; no one has been arrested in The Notorious B.I.G.'s slaying in Los Angeles. More than \$60,000 in rewards were offered for information on Jay's death. Theories abounded. Police received enough tips to fill 34 pages, according to a court filing. But the investigation languished as investigators said they ran up against reluctant witnesses.

Prosecutors have said in court papers that the case took crucial strides in the last five years as they interviewed new people, did more ballistics tests and got important witnesses to cooperate, among other steps. But defense lawyers have claimed the government dragged its feet in indicting Washington and Jordan, making it harder for them to defend themselves. Authorities say the two men confronted Jay in his studio after being buzzed in. Prosecutors allege Washington brandished a gun and ordered a witness to lie on the floor, and Jordan shot the 37-year-old DJ in the head and another witness in the leg. □



In this grab taken from video, activists react after throwing soup at the glass protecting the Mona Lisa, at the Louvre Museum, Paris, Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024, shouting slogans advocating for a sustainable food system. It comes as French farmers have been protesting for days across the country against several issues, including low wages.

(AP Photo/Clement Lanot)

By **SYLVIE CORBET**
Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Two climate

activists hurled soup Sunday at the glass protecting the "Mona Lisa" at the Lou-

See the moment climate activists throw soup at the 'Mona Lisa' in Paris

vre Museum in Paris and shouted slogans advocating for a sustainable food system. In a video posted on social media, two women with the words "FOOD RIPOSTE" written on their T-shirts could be seen passing under a security barrier to get closer to the painting and throwing soup at the glass protecting Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece. "What's the most important thing?" they shouted. "Art, or right to a healthy and sustainable food?"

"Our farming system is sick. Our farmers are dying at work," they added. The Louvre employees could then be seen putting black panels in front of the Mona Lisa and asking visitors to evacuate the room. Paris police said that two people were arrested following the incident. On its website, the Food Riposte group said the French government is breaking its climate commitments and called for the equivalent of the country's state-sponsored health

care system to be put in place to give people better access to healthy food while providing farmers a decent income. Angry French farmers have been using their tractors for days to set up road blockades and slow traffic across France to seek better remuneration for their produce, less red tape and protection against cheap imports. They also dumped stinky agricultural waste at the gates of government offices. □

Another big game by Travis Kelce gets the Chiefs back to the Super Bowl



Kansas City Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce (87) celebrates his touchdown against the Baltimore Ravens during the first half of an AFC Championship NFL football game, Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024, in Baltimore.

(AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**
AP Sports Writer

BALTIMORE (AP) — Travis Kelce delivered another monster playoff performance to put the defending champion Kansas City Chiefs back in the Super Bowl.

With pop star girlfriend Taylor Swift, brother Jason and mother Donna among those in attendance, Kelce made 11 catches for 116 yards and had a touchdown reception in the Chiefs' 17-10 AFC championship game victory over the Baltimore Ravens on Sunday.

In the process, Kelce broke Jerry Rice's NFL career record for the most catches in the postseason. He now has 156 in 21 playoff games.

Kansas City is making a fourth Super Bowl appearance in five years and is one victory against San Francisco or Detroit from a third NFL title in that span. Kelce has three TDs this postseason after two in a divisional round victory at Buffalo last week.

The favorite playmaker of Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes, Kelce came into the game with 1,694 yards receiving in the playoffs, trailing only Rice's 2,245 in the league's record book.

Kelce, a four-time All-Pro tight end and two-time Super Bowl champion and

MVP, also ranks second to Rice in playoff touchdown



Kansas City Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce (87) celebrates his touchdown during the first half of the AFC Championship NFL football game against the Baltimore Ravens, Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024, in Baltimore.

(AP Photo/Nick Wass)

catches. Rice had 22, and Kelce picked up his 19th on a 19-yard catch from Mahomes in the first quarter. The 34-year-old tight end has been one of football's most visible figures this sea-

son, from his relationship with Swift, who's at the peak of her fame, to a starring role in several TV commercials that have plastered his face all over game broadcasts and beyond. □



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Water's Edge Restaurant is a jewel many had the pleasure to find!

Eagle Beach – When you think of a restaurant that pleases the needs of a whole family or a large group of people with all different tastes? Think Water's Edge Restaurant. Located at the shore of Aruba's most wonderful beach, The Eagle Beach Aruba. Water's Edge Restaurant is guaranteed to serve you a fantastic magical night to remember. Whether you prefer to enjoy the view from indoors air conditioned comfort, outdoors in the soft tropical breeze or under a palapa with your toes in the sand. This spectacular restaurant offers the best ocean view sunset or sky full of stars dinner while the crispy Caribbean night wind caresses your face and plays with your hair.

From the minute you arrive there will be a great staff welcoming you with the most contagious smiles and warmth. The intense menu with a great variety of appetizers, main courses and delicious desserts will not disappoint. Seafood, Steaks and international favorites. All on one menu specially made just for you.

Culinary Voyage

Start your gastronomic journey with a scrumptious appetizer such as the Maryland Crab Cakes, maybe the Crispy

Calamari or the mouthwatering creamy Garlic Tarragon Shrimp. You can also opt for a classic French Onion Soup, a Lobster Bisque or the famously Water's Edge House Wedge, a crisp wedge of fresh romaine lettuce topped with homemade blue cheese dressing, diced tomatoes, chopped bacon, caramelized pecans and blue cheese crumbles, drizzled with balsamic reduction. This followed by the Chef's special of seafood such as Fresh salmon filet seasoned and grilled, topped with lemon cilantro butter and served with homemade mashed potatoes and fresh asparagus, a nice plate of Ahi Tuna or a succulent pasta dish like the Florentina Fettuccine Alfredo. Meat Lovers will have their fix with choices of a devourable 22oz. Bone-In "Tomahawk" Rib-Eye, pan seared in garlic infused oil and finished in the oven or our juicy N.Y Strip Loin, seasoned & grilled. All our steaks options are seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Served with homemade mashed potatoes, seasoned vegetables and a choice of red wine reduction, green peppercorn demi glace, mushroom sauce, or bacon blue cheese butter. For extra sides the options are delectable. Fresh asparagus, seasonal vegetables, mashed or baked potatoes, fries or rice and beans. Combine your personal choice with one of the most exclusive wine from the great selection of international wines to compliment your dish. Kids will enjoy every item of the specially compiled kids menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians and gluten-free guests. To end the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness, the desserts are wild. From a piece of coconut flan, NY cheese cake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with choco-



late sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.

Creating memories

If you are planning a birthday dinner, here you will receive a nice bottle of champagne to take home with you to extend your experience even further whether on the beach or your own private balcony.

Live entertainment

Just about every day of the week, there is a different live entertainment by the best local artists for you to enjoy. Whether you're in a romantic mood, or more in a swinging mood, there is absolutely a night especially for you where you can combine great music with delicious cocktails mixed with concoctions. In addition, Water's Edge offers three daily Happy Hours from 12pm-1pm, 4pm-6pm and again from 9pm-10pm with all premium brands specially priced.

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Whether you join us for breakfast, lunch or dinner, Water's Edge Restaurant & Bar offers a relaxed and inspirational dining experience overlooking the beautiful Eagle Beach with spectacular ocean views. Gather with friends and family for drinks and appetizers or a night of pampering and relaxation.

Thank you to all our guests

From the bottom of our hearts, we would like to Thank all of our guests who showed us so much love and support all throughout the year, and hopefully will continue to do so in the years to come. What we are most grateful for is that we could get back to doing what we love, which is looking after our guests. So, thank you for every dinner, lunch, breakfast, every to-go order, every glass of wine, every birthday, anniversary and date-night that you spent with us this last year. To our new guests, Welcome! We hope you to see you back soon! ☑



"Water's Edge Restaurant is where magnificent beach views, amazing food and excellent service come together."

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For more information about the menus, entertainment and hours, please visit the website **watersedge-aruba.com**

